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SIGNIFICANCE OF FILM LANGUAGE IN CREATING HIV AWARENESS: 'ADOMYA'

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Abstract: The cinematic medium is not solely intended for entertainment. Rather, each film is replete with sophisticated and eloquent film language and theory, and conveys a distinct message to both the individual and society at large. Assamese films, which are a constituent of the Indian film industry, are no exception to this phenomenon. Including Hindi, analogous to films produced in other Indian languages, Assamese films also endeavour to engender a constructive influence on society and its populace. In this context, it is noteworthy to mention the Assamese language film, 'ADOMYA', which was helmed by the acclaimed filmmaker Bobby Sarma Baruah. The aforementioned film, 'ADOMYA', offers a poignant depiction of the intricate nature of the existence of individuals afflicted with HIV. The objective of this document is to comprehend the constructive influence of this cinematic work and its linguistic elements on the promotion of social consciousness.

Key Words: - HIV, Struggle, Film Language

1.0 I. INTRODUCTION

The critically acclaimed film, 'ADOMYA', is both written and directed by Bobby Sarma Baruah, and has received numerous accolades for its exceptional quality. Notably, it won the Best Film Award in the Spiritual Film Category at the 13th Dhaka International Film Festival, the 15th Rainbow Film Festival in London (2014), the 1st International Women's Film Festival in Bangladesh (2014), and the Cana Film Festival in Singapore (2014). Furthermore, 'ADOMYA' has been widely acclaimed in more than 18 different national and international film festivals. The film has garnered widespread acclaim at both national and international film festivals, and has the potential to increase awareness about HIV. It is imperative that individuals living with HIV are not marginalized within society. The film effectively conveys the issue at hand through its film language, which encompasses various elements such as shots, symbols, metaphors, music, editing etc. These elements serve to enhance the overall language of the film. This paper aims to analyse the significance of the film's message, through film language, which holds great importance for society as a whole, and to ensure that it reaches beyond the confines of the Assamese audience.

II. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- Raising awareness regarding HIV.
- By bringing these films to the forefront, introduce Assamese films to the Indian populace.
- Evaluating the role of film language in narrative construction.

III. SCOPE OF STUDY

The present study delves into the discourse of film language, with a specific focus on the Assamese film “ADOMYA”, which serves as an illustrative example in the investigation of HIV. The research paper aims to explore the ways in which film language can be employed to address sensitive and complex issues such as HIV. The utilization of “ADOMYA” as a case study provides a valuable insight into the potential of film as a medium for raising awareness and promoting social change. The findings of this study contribute to the growing body of literature on the role of film in public health communication.

IV. METHOD OF STUDY

This study primarily employs analytical method, while also incorporating descriptive and survey methodologies as deemed necessary. Additionally, the library study approach has been utilized in this study.

V. LITERATURE REVIEW

The research on HIV remains an ongoing endeavour, with medical professionals, scientists, and experts continuing to conduct experiments aimed at eradicating the virus. Despite the development of improved treatments, caution is still necessary. As a result, various programs are periodically implemented to increase social awareness. Literature serves as a particularly effective medium in this regard, providing a means of disseminating information and promoting understanding of the disease. The importance of ongoing research and awareness-raising efforts cannot be overstated, as HIV remains a significant public health concern with far-reaching implications.

The literary works encompassing the aforementioned titles comprise the novel *April Fool's Day* (1993) by the esteemed Australian author Bryce Courtenay, the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Hours* by Michael Cunningham, and *The Green Road* by the distinguished Irish author Anne Enright. Literary works such as novels, stories, poems, and plays have been utilized to raise awareness about HIV.

Similarly, HIV has also been featured prominently in films. Notable examples include American films such as *It's My Party* (1996), *Straight Outta Compton* (2015), and *Pedro* (2008), as well as British films like *To Die For* (1994) and *Intimate Contact* (1987). German films such as *A Virus Knows No Morals* (1986) and *Do Fish Do It* (2002) have also addressed the issue of HIV. The Indian film industry has produced notable films related to HIV such as *Phir Milenge* (2004), *Bloos Brothers* (2007), *My Brother Nikhil* (2005), and *Nidaan* (2000) etc.

2.1 DISCUSSION

The film, ‘ADOMYA’, adopts a narrative approach in its presentation. It centres on the arduous life journey of Juri, a woman who has contracted the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). Initially, Juri's daughter, Jonak, is oblivious to her mother's affliction. However, Juri subsequently entrusts Jonak with her diary, which chronicles the events of her life. The story then unfolds through Jonak's reading of the diary. The film possesses a unique momentum as it employs a captivating approach to narrating the story through the diary of Juri, rather than presenting it in a parallel manner. This storytelling technique has been utilized in Hindi films such as '3 Idiots', 'Rockstar' etc.

The success of a film is based on the language of that film. Language moves the film at a special pace from beginning to end. The importance of its language in the film cannot be underestimated.

In order to comprehensively analyse the language of film, it is imperative to consider multiple facets. Primarily, an analysis of the shots reveals that they are meticulously arranged in a strategic manner within the film. Consequently, the film circumvents the utilization of superfluous dialogue or elucidation. As an illustration, the initial sequence of the film ‘Adomya’ portrays the protagonist Juri engaged in a shopping activity at a local market, followed by a subsequent shot depicting her daughter Jonak arriving home tardily, while Juri is preoccupied with her sewing machine or the surroundings of her abode. This judicious employment of shots is consistently observed throughout the entirety of the film. The final scenes of the film, which include the Juri's address to HIV patients, Jonak's guise as a doctor, and Jonak and Juri's departure in a car, serve to preclude any further interpretation of the film. The initial shot of a single mother is readily discernible to the viewer, and the concluding shot depicts a triumphant woman who has persevered through life's challenges without surrendering.

The utilization of metaphors constitutes a distinctive feature of the language of film. In this regard, the film under consideration employs metaphors in tandem with the contextual elements. Specifically, the HIV-infected Juri is portrayed as being marginalized by society. To illustrate this state of pain and neglect, the *Bhaona* (one kind of traditional drama in Assam) performance depicts the stripping of Draupadi's clothes. This act serves as a metaphor for the plight of the Juri. The exploitation of women is a pervasive issue that has persisted for centuries. The neglect of Draupadi in the Mahabharata serves as a poignant metaphor for the continued exploitation of women in contemporary society.

The case of Juri serves as a poignant illustration of the pervasive societal issues surrounding HIV. Juri contracted the virus from her husband, who was subsequently held responsible for his own demise. Despite having been previously esteemed for her marriage to an engineer, Juri was met with disdain and disrespect during her illness. Regrettably, such occurrences are not novel within our community.

The filmmaker masterfully portrays the struggles of the Juri's life, yet the film's story is infused with a powerful sense of optimism. As the doctor presents pregnant Juri with the difficult decision of whether or not to give birth while infected with HIV, a train passes by, momentarily halting their response. This train serves as a symbol of hope and the unstoppable momentum of life.

The absence of dialogue in the preceding sequence is followed by a shot of Juri giving birth a girl, which the filmmaker adeptly conveys through the use of shots, metaphors, and symbols, without resorting to any verbal exposition. In the resulting scene, Jonak, a young girl from Juri, is subjected to physical assault by individuals at the riverbank, who are apprehensive about contracting HIV from Jonak. At that juncture, Juri expeditiously approached Jonak, coinciding with the passing of a train. Subsequently, Juri administered a blood test to Jonak. The night prior to receiving the test results, while Juri and Jonak were in a state of slumber, the audible sound of a train passing by was heard once more. The sound of the train carried a sense of optimism and hope for a brighter future. The following day, Jonak's blood test yielded negative results. The train's presence seamlessly harmonizes with the rhythm of life.

The next topic of discussion pertains to the contextualization of music. The lyrical content of the song,

"I want to touch the sky, I want to be the sun," (মোৰ মনে বচিৰাৰে আকাশ চুবলৈ, মোৰ মনে বচিৰাৰে সুৰ্য্য হ'বলৈ) conveys the individual's aspirations and desires that undergo a transformation over time. The filmmaker employs the technique of flashbacks in the visual representation of the song, juxtaposing the protagonist's current state of sorrow with her past state of happiness. This parallelism serves to underscore the stark contrast between the two phases of the character's life.

The language employed in character dialogue constitutes a distinctive component of film language. The film employs suitable dialogue that is consistent with the character's persona. The elderly women in the village engage in dialogues that incorporate phrases such as *ভগৱানৰ ইচ্ছা* (God's will), *গা সাতখন আঠখন* (very happy), *ইঞ্জিনিয়াৰ মানুহ* (engineer) and the like. The use of colloquial and English terms such as 'bey', 'girlfriend', 'ten minutes' is observed among present-day youth who are deeply engrossed in modernity.

This film text aims to shed light on the adverse effects of a patriarchal society. Rather than investigating the cause of Juri's husband's contraction of HIV, the society blame onto Juri. When she visited her mother's residence after her husband's demise, then she was not invited by her acquaintance. Due to apprehensions surrounding HIV, the villagers have prohibited Juri and her child Jonak from entering the *Namghar*. Furthermore, Juri is subjected to physical abuse by her superior officer, purportedly in the guise of assistance.

Despite the challenges faced, Juri has persevered and remained steadfast in her efforts. Juri, while contending with physical ailments, also attempt to instil humanity in her daughter, Jonak. The desire to live and establish Jonak as a person is palpable. The film, aptly named "ADOMYA", captures the unwavering determination and bravery of the Juri, who refuse to be deterred. The film's title is suitably conveyed through its poignant portrayal, capturing the essence of its name with exquisite precision and artistry.

The variations in the social conduct of each character portrayed in the film contribute to a diverse tempo, thereby enhancing the overall cinematic experience. One such character is the doctor who attends to Juri, providing assistance in every case. Juri's mother and brother are also portrayed with such genuine human emotions. Nevertheless, on numerous occasions, they have chosen to remain silent in the face of adversity. For instance, when Juri and her family are forced to reside in a hut located in the garden of their home, they are

unable to voice their concerns. Additionally, when Juri relocates to the city with her mother and daughter Jonak, then her mother expresses her disapproval of, Juri as a woman, coming back to home late from work. Juri's mother, however, provides unwavering support to her daughter throughout the ordeal.

The group of young individuals, including both boys and girls, who associate with Jonak or her friends, belong to a distinct societal class that perceives modernity solely as a means of indulging in luxury. This particular generation has developed a concerning dependence on drugs and displays a lack of concern for their future prospects. In an attempt to assimilate with these individuals who hold themselves in high regard, Jonak resorts to deceitful behaviour towards his mother.

Another character in the film is Malti, a working woman. The character is not of much importance in the film, but Juri later gets to know that Malti is the root cause of Juri's husband's HIV. Malti was also neglected by society because of this disease. However, this character did not get much scope for expansion.

The people of Juri's village and the people of Juri's in-law's house refer to those people in society who have always believed in the prevailing beliefs. They do not look at new aspects, that is why they perceive HIV with hatred and fear.

Films such as “ADOMYA” effectively convey a crucial message to society regarding the negative attitudes towards HIV prevalent in our communities. The primary reason for the continued lack of acceptance and understanding of diseases such as HIV is the absence of education and social awareness. Consequently, individuals who contract the virus often feel hopeless about their future. *A total of 43 studies were included in this systematic review, and a meta-regression included 170,234 participants. The pooled prevalence estimates of suicidal ideation, attempted suicide, and deaths by suicide were 22.3%, 9.6%, and 1.7%, respectively. The following significant risk factors for suicide ideation were found: substance use, depression, low quality of life, low social support, without HIV status disclosure, living alone, low level of memory problems, family history of suicide, and stage III of HIV. Risk factors for suicide attempts were depression and family history of suicide. An elevated risk for suicide-related death was found for people living with HIV (PLHIV) who had a psychiatric disorder and in studies conducted in hospital-based settings (versus national database studies or HIV clinic settings)¹.*

3.1 CONCLUSION

The filmmaker of ‘Adomya’ has masterfully presented the crucial aspects of HIV in a positive way, highlighting the beauty and potential of life. The film touches upon important topics such as precautions, diet, treatment, and the severity of the virus at different stages. This approach has proven to be highly effective, as it not only educates but also inspires hope and a desire to live life to the fullest. ‘Adomya’ is a must-watch for anyone seeking to understand and overcome the challenges of HIV. The filmmaker's approach to the subject matter is commendable, as it promotes a positive outlook on life despite the challenges posed by the virus.

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